

# Ensuring standards of clinical care provided by veterinary nurses through regulation, registration and accredited training

Dr. David Smith, Kirsty Dougherty and Kendra Yates

[d.smith@napier.ac.uk](mailto:d.smith@napier.ac.uk),

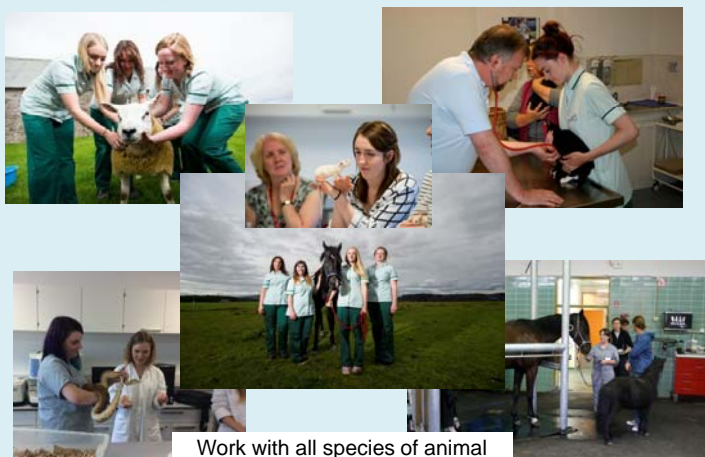
School of Life, Sports and Social Sciences, Edinburgh Napier University, Sighthill Campus, EH11 4BN, Edinburgh, Scotland



## Introduction

The gestation of veterinary nursing as a recognised and self-regulated profession in the United Kingdom can be best described as long and difficult. Caught between the twin expectations and anxieties of the well-established professions of nursing and veterinary medicine, veterinary nursing made slow progress to the point where it became a self-regulated profession in 2011 under the auspices of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), however the title of Veterinary Nurse still remains unprotected by statute and can be used by anyone. This poster describes what RCVS Registered Veterinary Nurses can and can not do under Schedule 3 (2002 amendment) of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 and argues that protecting the statutorily defined role of veterinary surgeons in the UK lies in strengthening the regulation, registration and training of veterinary nurses. The professionalization of Veterinary Nurses and their improved training allows veterinary surgeons to concentrate on what they do best and ensures better welfare and peri-operative care of animals by dedicating trained personnel to the role.

## What Registered Veterinary Nurses can do



Work with all species of animal



Manage anaesthetised patients

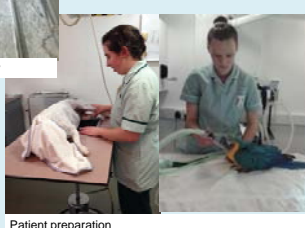


Provide dedicated peri-operative care



Process laboratory diagnostic tests

Prepare for surgery



Patient preparation

## What Registered Veterinary Nurses cannot do



Only veterinary surgeons can perform surgery (other than minor)



Only veterinary surgeons can diagnose diseases and injury



Veterinary nurses can only work under the direction of the veterinary surgeon responsible for the animal

## What The United Kingdom Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966) says:

It is "unlawful for anyone other than a registered veterinary surgeon, or someone entered in the Supplementary Veterinary Register, to practise veterinary surgery (whether or not for payment)"

"veterinary surgery" means the art and science of veterinary surgery and medicine be taken to include—

- the diagnosis of diseases in, and injuries to, animals including tests performed on animals for diagnostic purposes;
- the giving of advice based upon such diagnosis;
- the medical or surgical treatment of animals; and
- the performance of surgical operations on animals

## Statutory limitation of Veterinary Nursing role -Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966

### 1991 amendment

Veterinary nurses are permitted to provide any medical treatment or carry out minor surgery (not involving entry into a body cavity) to a companion animal at the direction of the veterinary surgeon responsible for the care of the animal provided the veterinary surgeon was the employer, or was acting on behalf of the employer, of the veterinary nurse

A companion animal was defined as 'an animal kept as a pet or for companionship, not an equid or farm animal'

### 2002 amendment

- Appropriately trained Veterinary nurses allowed to treat all animal species



A poster presented to the 7th Kerala Veterinary Science Congress 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2015 at the College of Veterinary & Animal Sciences Pookode, Wayanad campus of Kerala Veterinary & Animal Sciences University

